

Parashah 48 Tidbit
Shoftim, שֹׁפְטִים, Judges
Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17
by Marc Gravelle
marc@bondservantsofyeshua.ca

Deuteronomy 16:18 – 21:9

Shoftim, *Shoftim means Judges.*

In this part of Deuteronomy, Mosheh commands the people to make Judges, **AND** that they command these judges, וְשִׁפְטוּ אֶת-הָעָם בְּשֹׁפְטֵי צֶדֶק, VeShovto, and they shall judge, HaAm, the people, Mishpat, with **JUDGMENT**, Tzedeq, that is Just. Now before we can understand Yahweh's commandment here, we have to understand what He meant, when He said, that they are to judge the people of Yisrael with **JUST JUDGEMENTS**? According to Scripture, where do we find the basis for these *so called JUST JUDGEMENTS*?

The word **JUST** is translated from the Hebrew צֶדֶק, Tzedek, which also means **righteous**. As we have discussed before, **righteous** ways and or **righteousness**, can only come from our heavenly Father, and His Living Word, the Words of His Torah of Life, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, the very same Words that Yahweh gave to Mosheh at Mount Sinai, and the very same Words that became flesh and dwelt among us, the very same Words that are filled with Yahweh's everlasting **TRUTH**, and His **GRACE** (*John 1:1; 1:14*)

*Psalm 119:142 Your **righteousness IS an everlasting righteousness, and Your Torah IS the TRUTH.***

*Deuteronomy 4:6 Keep therefore and do them; (the Words of My Torah of Life) for **THIS IS your WISDOM and your UNDERSTANDING in the sight of ALL the nations, who shall hear ALL these Statutes, AND SAY, Surely, this Great Nation (Yisrael) is a WISE and UNDERSTANDING people.** 7 For what nation is there **SO GREAT**, who have Elohim so near unto them, as Yahweh our Elohim **IS**, in all things that we call upon Him for? 8 And what nation is there **SO GREAT, that has STATUTES and JUDGMENTS so RIGHTEOUS AS ALL THIS TORAH (Law), which I set before you this day?***

How do we, as mere mortal, actually attain **THIS RIGHTEOUSNESS** according to Scripture?

*Deuteronomy 6:25 tells us how: And it shall be **OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, IF** we observe to do **ALL these Commandments** before Yahweh our Elohim, as He has Commanded us.*

According to Scripture, **Righteousness does NOT** come from man, *1Corinthians 3:19 For the wisdom of this world **IS FOOLISHNESS** with Elohim. For it is written, He takes the wise in their own craftiness.*

This verse tells us that **the wisdom of man IS nothing BUT foolishness** to Yahweh; and Scripture makes it very clear that true **righteousness CANNOT and does NOT come out of**

foolishness.

In *Psalm 119:142* the Psalmist declares, ***Your righteousness is an EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, and (ALL the Words of) Your Torah (Law) IS THE TRUTH.***

IF YHVH 's RIGHTEOUSNESS IS INDEED EVERLASTING, then it stands to reason, that ***everything*** that He says, all the Words that He speaks ***ARE ALSO, EVERLASTING,*** and Scripture makes it very clear that the Words that Yahweh spoke to the people of Yisrael, of whom you and I are a part of, from mount Sinai, ***ARE*** the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Directives for everlasting Life, that He Himself gave Mosheh.

David, the man that Elohim called *a man after His own heart* said in *Psalm 40:10* ***I have NOT hidden Your RIGHTEOUSNESS within my heart; I have declared Your Faithfulness and Your Salvation: I have NOT concealed Your lovingkindness and Your TRUTH from the great congregation.***

Who ***IS the Great Congregation*** that David is talking about here, in *Psalm 40*? Well you can be assured that it is ***NOT*** the Christian, nor the Catholic man made religions, and their false man made doctrines, ***AND, NEITHER*** is it the man made religion of Judaism, and their man made oral torah, their man made doctrine. The Great Congregation, ***IS*** the people of Yahweh's Yisrael, and Yahweh's Yisrael, my friends, ***ARE, ALL*** the people that have and or will, ***CHOOSE*** to surrender their hearts, minds, souls and strength to our heavenly Father, confess and repent of their Sins, their transgressions of the Words of His Torah of Life, and then, make a commitment to love Him, by willingly and lovingly choosing, to zealously believe, follow and obey all of the Words of His Torah of Life, as Messiah did, and taught us to do.

David proudly declared the ***RIGHTEOUSNESS*** of Yahweh, which means that he proudly declared to the whole world, that he is ***AN OBEDIENT SERVANT*** of all the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah of Life, for according to Scripture, obedience to the Words of the Torah of Yahweh, ***IS*** the definition of ***RIGHTEOUSNESS*** (*Deuteronomy 6:25*). David declared that, to all who would listen to him, that the Words of Elohim's Torah, ***ARE*** Elohim's eternal ***TRUTH***, and he did that with the zealousness of a young man wooing His bride to be, and we, you and I, are to do the same.

Verse 19 explains a little of how our Judges should act. Our Judges are not to wrestle in their minds with ***what*** or ***how*** they are to judge, for ***IT IS ALL WRITTEN DOWN*** in the Words of the Torah, that Yahweh gave to Mosheh at Mount Sinai, the same Words that He Commanded us ***NOT TO ADD anything to, NOR take anything away from.*** Furthermore, these Judges, are ***NOT*** to treat any person or any groups or category of people, any differently, than they treat all other peoples. Yahweh has made it very clear, that there shall ***NOT*** be any special favours for the rich, nor the poor, the influential person, nor the small guy; ***ALL, ARE to be treated and judged the very same way.*** As you know, our current so called ***JUSTICE SYSTEM,*** here in Canada and to the south of us, in the US, ***has little to no justice in it at all, it is JUSTICE in name only,*** and not in fact and practice; for in its current state, our so called justice system, is, at the very least, a two tiered system, if not more, therefore, according to Scripture, our so called ***justice system, IS*** the epitome of ***INJUSTICE.*** According to the Torah, the Judges ***ARE***

NOT to accept *Gifts* or *Bribes* from the people that they are judging over, for it will *pervert* their decisions. That is not the case in our courts today, for there **ARE** special interest groups that are treated differently than others, and, when the Judge sides with any special group at the expense of **JUSTICE**, he is in a sense **ACCEPTING A BRIBE**. What is a bribe? A bribe is the acceptance of some monetary recompense, or a favour of some type or other, or the accolades of the people that he judged in favour of. It is a bribe, because the Judge *subverted Justice* or the Law, for his own personal agenda or gain, rather than the agenda of **Righteous Judgement**.

Leviticus 19:15 tells us **You shall NOT DO Unrighteousness in Judgement; you shall NOT respect the person of the poor, NOR honour the person of the mighty; BUT in RIGHTEOUSNESS shall you judge your neighbour.**

The whole teaching of Shoftim **IS**, **Be you holy as I am Holy**, *Leviticus 19:2*. Therefore, the judges **ARE** to judge by Elohim's standard **and NOT their own man made ways**.

Our so called Justice System in Canada today, **IS** a perfect example of what happens when man throws out the Torah or Laws of Elohim, the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah of life, His **inerrant and everlasting** teaching and instructions, and chooses instead, to bring in man made laws, based on man's finite wisdom, the very same wisdom that Yahweh Elohim **calls foolishness**, and calls it, **the righteousness of man**. The end result, **IS**, that in many cases, it becomes an actual **perversion of justice**, where murderers go free and someone who defends himself against an attacker, is sent to prison for what they call using excessive force. There are so many examples of **injustices** in our judicial system today, that we could debate it forever.

That means, that there is only one solution, that will **CURE** all of the injustice that are found in man's self imposed, justice system, and that **IS**, the re-implementing of **ALL** the Words of the Torah Commandments of our heavenly Father, because, in **TRUTH**, that is **HOW** we will all be judged on Judgement Day, at the beginning of the eighth millennium. On that day, the people that are judged, will either be **ushered into the kingdom of Elohim onto an eternal and everlasting Life, where they will spend eternity in the kingdom of Elohim**, **OR**, they will be sent to their second death, in the lake of fire. Would it not therefore, be advantageous to all people, **IF** we were to start using the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah of Life, as the foundation for our judicial system, today, since those **ARE** the Words that we will indeed be judged by, on judgment day?

Yahweh ends this chapter with reiterating the fact, that He will **NOT** share His glory with anyone or anything, therefore, He prohibits the people from planting any type of grove of trees near any of the altars of Yahweh that the people will erect, and He reiterates **Commandment number two** about making and setting up **graven images**. Why does Yahweh repeat these instructions over and over again? It is because He knows that corporate Yisrael, will transgress His Commandments, as they have done for millennia, and He keeps warning us **NOT to do so**, because He knows that transgressing the Words of His Torah, **IS SIN**, and that the wages of Sin, **IS death**, and since He loves His created human beings so much, He does **NOT** want even one person to Perish, therefore He warns us over and over again to learn to believe, follow and obey His Commandments, **IF** we want to enter into His everlasting Kingdom when we are resurrected.

In the last part of verse 18 that I quoted above, וְשָׁפְטֵי אֶת-הָעָם מִשְׁפַּט־צֶדֶק, there is the word, Et, אֶת, and it is spelled with the letters Aleph and Tav, and these two letters are never translated into English, in our English Scriptures, and these two letters happen to be the First and Last letters of the Hebrew Aleph Bet, and the ye represent Messiah, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. And here in *verse 18*, we can see that this *Aleph Tav* is not a stand alone *Aleph Tav*, but it has a *Maqef* attached to it.

When the Aleph Tav letters have a Maqef attached to it, means, that it grammatically indicates the subject of the sentence, and in this case it is HaAm, הָעָם, the *people*, us, we, you and I and all of Yisrael, ARE the subject of the sentence, and I believe that it is very significant. *Verse 18 Judges and officers shall you make for yourself in all your gates, which Yahweh your Elohim gives you, throughout your tribes: and they shall JUDGE Aleph Tav the people with Just Judgment.*

So Yahweh has made it perfectly clear, that between *Just Judgement* and the *people*, stands the *Aleph Tav*, our Redeemer and Saviour, our intercessor, who *IS*, the Words of the Living Torah of our heavenly Father made flesh.

In *verse 1 Deuteronomy 17*, Yahweh reminds us, that we are *NOT* to offer Him anything upon His altar that has any kind of blemish, for according to Yahweh, that is an abomination to Him. *WHY* do you think that this Commandment is repeated here in *Deuteronomy*? It is because, Yisrael *IS* about to go into the Promised Land, and Yahweh knows what we, His people, are like, and therefore, He reminds us, that since He gives us nothing but His best, we are to do the same for Him, we are *NOT* to sacrifice onto our Elohim anything but our best, and that includes, our sacrificial animals, our efforts, our works, therefore, that means that we are to ensure that what we give our heavenly Father *IS our absolute best*.

Verse 2 through to *verse 7* speaks of what we are to do when we find *evil* (*Sin, transgressions of the Words of His Torah*) in our midst. If we find people, men or women, that have done wickedness, men and women that continuously transgress the Words of the Torah of our heavenly Father, then, we *ARE* to ensure that the evidence against them, *IS TRUE*, and that can only be done by the mouth of no less than *two or three witnesses*, and then, we are to take those people, the ones where it has been proven that they did acts of wickedness, and who rebelled against the Words of the Torah of our heavenly Father, to the gates of the city, and stone them to death. However the first stones *MUST* be thrown by the witnesses themselves, and *then*, the rest of the people are to join in the stoning of the condemned person or persons.

You may ask, what *IF* they were false witnesses, what happens then? Well, under the Torah Commandments, *IF* a *witness* is a *false witness*, and it is found out, that he/she has given false testimony, making themselves, false witnesses, then, the penalty that would have been assessed or that has already been assessed to the person that they bore *false witness against, will be applied to them*, the false witness or witnesses. I don't know about you, but I would want to be real *sure* of all my facts, before I became a *witness* against anyone, so that I would not incur the penalty of a false witness.

Messiah applied this law to the group of people that wanted to put the adulterous woman to

death in *John 8:1-11*. First of all, it is quite clear that they did not have **two witnesses**, and those who were yelling for her to be stoned, would have to cast the first stone, which means, that they would have had to be **witnesses** of the so called adultery, for that is the Law, **the witnesses MUST** throw the first stone. Therefore, since there was **NO real proof**, whoever threw the first stone would have automatically become a **false witness**, and the penalty that they wanted to impose on the so called adulterous woman, would then, have become their punishment.

Did Messiah usurp or contradict the Torah that was given to Mosheh at mount Sinai by Yahweh, when He forgave the adulterous woman, as Christianity teaches that He did? Elohim forbid, no, no, a thousand times no, He did not contradict the Torah, Messiah fulfilled, pleroo (*Matthew 5:18*) He confirmed, He established the Law that was given to Mosheh, by Yahweh, at Mount Sinai, thereby forever establishing that He did **NOT** come to destroy the Torah, the Law, **BUT**, He came to **fulfill, pleroo, confirm its validity, and its everlasting standing**, for the Words of the Torah **ARE** Yahweh's everlasting **TRUTH**.

At the risk of repeating myself, this tells us that Messiah, upheld or fulfilled the Commandment of doing **Just Judgment**, because according to the Torah, there were **NO witnesses**, and therefore this woman could **NOT** be put to death. Unlike what has been taught to most believers of the houses of Elohim of today, that our heavenly Father is sitting on His throne in heaven, and just waiting for us to make a mistake, so that He can punish us. We have to understand that we serve a **loving caring compassionate Father**, who does **NOT want even ONE PERSON to perish**, therefore, that means that the Christian teaching that Messiah usurped the Torah, **is actually contrary to the TRUTH** that is taught in the Hebraic and Apostolic Scriptures, for Messiah, who is the Words of the Living Torah of our heavenly Father made flesh, upheld **ALL** the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah of Life. **WE** have to understand that our heavenly Father knows our frailties and our shortcomings, and it is His deepest desire that **none of us perish, NOT** even those that are evil, but that all of us, including those that are evil, would turn from any and all of their wicked and evil ways, surrender their hearts, minds, souls and strength, to Him, and make the commitment that from now on, they **WILL** believe, follow and obey **ALL** the Words of His Torah of Life, **AND LIVE**.
Ezekiel 18:23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? Says Yahweh Elohim: and NOT that he should return from his ways, and live?

The Grace showed to us, by our heavenly Father and His Son, our Messiah, by His exemplary Torah obedient life, that He willingly and lovingly chose to live, while He was here on earth with us, IS the very same Torah obedient life that compelled Him, through His Love for our heavenly Father and us, to obey Him, and therefore, He willingly went to the cross **and died a horrible death on that cross FOR OUR SAKE**, and as I said above, Messiah did all of that, **BECAUSE** of His great love for our heavenly Father and for us. Since, according to Scripture, Messiah is the Words of the Living Torah of our heavenly Father, then we, His children make a commitment to study Elohim's Words, exactly as they are written, and given to Mosheh at Mount Sinai, and according to Scripture, If we do indeed do that then, we will actually see the **GRACE** of Elohim in action in our daily lives, for every Word, every Commandment, every Statute and every Ordinance that Yahweh has given us is filled with His grace and mercy.

Unfortunately, man has so **perverted** Elohim's Laws, the Words of His Torah of Life, that they now call the Words of His Torah of Life, **EVIL**, and they go as far as to say, that the people

who willingly choose to lovingly obey the Words of the Torah of our heavenly Father, that Yahweh Himself gave to Mosheh at Mount Sinai, to give to all the people of Yisrael, which of course includes *ALL* of the Commandments of our heavenly Father, ***ARE actually branded as being UNDER BONDAGE, even under a CURSE.***

We have to understand that Scripture makes it abundantly clear, that the Law, the Words of the Torah of our heavenly Father ***ARE LOVE, GRACE, MERCY and COMPASSION IN ACTION***, and until, all people, who profess to believe, follow and obey the Words of the Elohim of Abraham, Yitzchaq, and Ya'aqov, realize that fact, they will ***NOT*** be able to have a complete and intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father, nor with His only begotten Son, Messiah, our Redeemer and Saviour, who just happens to be, the Words of the Living Torah of our heavenly Father, made flesh, and who confirms to all of us that the Father and the Son are One, they are echad, so ***IF*** you ***reject*** the Words of One of them, you are actually ***rejecting*** both of them.

Just answer this question for me, if you can. ***HOW*** can anyone have an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father, ***IF*** they don't believe the Words that He gave to Mosheh at Mount Sinai? Or, if they somehow believe that the Words and the Commandments that the infinitely wise Creator of all things, gave to Mosheh at Mount Sinai, and specified they were forever, have now, somehow been abolished and or done away with, by man and his ***FINITE*** wisdom. And these finite wisdom people, go as far as to say that the people who willingly and lovingly choose to believe, follow and obey the Words of the Torah of our heavenly Father, ***ARE in bondage, and or doing evil?***

No one, ***NOT ONE PERSON*** can say, they love our heavenly Father, and ***THEN***, in the same breath, call the Words that came directly out of His mouth, to Mosheh's ear, the Words of His Torah of Life, ***the instrument that puts people in BONDAGE.***

In *verses 8-13* we are told that we must accept the judge's decisions and carry out the sentences.

If we lived in a homogeneous Torah observing society, with Torah observing judges, and there arose a dispute, would it not be easier to accept the judges decision, knowing that they, the judges, were men that were chosen to be judges, ***because of their integrity, because of their love for the Torah of Yahweh***, and their love for the Father, rather than a man who was appointed as a judge ***because*** of His political affiliations, and or, his business associations. As soon as ***that kind of judge is appointed, you already KNOW***, that he or she ***IS*** biased, because they have already accepted a bribe. The bribe is their appointment to the bench by whatever political party that is in power at that time, because the party leaders believe, and rightly so, that that judge that they recommended for the job, will rule in favour of the party, whenever and wherever possible because, he has the same biases as the party that is in power, otherwise he would not have been appointed.

Verses 14-20 are a prophecy that is fulfilled when Yisrael asks for a King, and Saul is given to them as their King. Mosheh ***knew*** that Yisrael would reject Elohim as their King, 400 plus years, before it happened. Yahweh even set the rules for the King that was to rule over Yisrael/Judah in the future, ***BUT***, unfortunately, none of the Kings of Judah of the Southern

kingdom NOR any of the Kings of Yisrael, the Northern kingdom, followed **ALL** the Statutes that Yahweh had put in place for them. One of the most important Statutes was, the King that was in power was to **write a copy of the Torah for himself**, and it was to be with him always, and he was to read from the Torah all the days of his life, and apply that kind of justice, throughout his kingdom. There is no record of that Statute ever being carried out by any King.

There were approximately 22 Kings of the Southern Kingdom called Judah, and 19 Kings of the Northern Kingdom called Yisrael, before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. Scripture says that only six Kings of Judah **did that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh** and, of those six; **two** did evil in the last years of their reign. Quite the legacy, that we, as human brings, have, when we step away from the Word of Elohim and govern ourselves by man's wisdom. How many thousands of years, and how many failed societies will it take, for us to learn that Elohim **IS ALWAYS RIGHT, AND WE ARE NOT?**

In *verse 12* we have an anomaly in the Hebrew Scriptures. In English we have, *And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken* (will not shema) **unto the priest that stands to minister there before Yahweh your Elohim, or unto the judge, even that man SHALL DIE: and you shall put away the evil from Yisrael.**

In Hebrew, the highlighted portion is לבלתי שמע אל-הכהן העמד, Leviltiy Shemah El Ha'Kohen Ha'Amad. The last letter of the Hebrew word Leviltiy is a Yod, the three letters of the next word, the word shemah, are the letters, Shin, Mem, and Ayin, and the two letters of the third word, El, are the letters, Aleph and Lamed. Together they spell the word or name, Yishmael, and therefore, this **verse** is telling us, that we are **NOT** to have the same heart as Yishmael, who was a disobedient rebellious son, as is indicated by the words **will not, or failed to hearken unto the priest.** Amein

There is one stand alone Aleph Tav in this *Deuteronomy 17*.
Verse 9: And you shall come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show you Aleph Tav the sentence of judgment:

There are also another **eight** Aleph Tavs that are attached to words with a Maqef and there are **twelve** words that contain both the Aleph and Tav letters within them. The number eight in Scripture speaks of new beginning and the number twelve speaks of Yahweh's perfect way of governing His kingdom. Therefore I believe that Yahweh is telling us through the use of these Aleph Tavs that **IF** we want to experience His promised New Beginning, then we had better learn to submit to His perfect governance, by learning to believe, follow, and obey all of the Words of His Torah of Life. Amein.

Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.

Have a great Elohim blessed week and may Yahweh bless your every thought, and your every deed. Until we meet again. Amein, Shalom Alechem!